

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 remain in the application.

Claim 3 is proposed to be amended to obviate the indefiniteness rejection under 35 USC 112, and thus claim 3 should be in condition for allowance upon entry of the Amendment.

Claims 1, 2 and 4-11 all stand as rejected under 35 USC 103, claims 1, 2, 8, and 9 rejected as unpatentable over Bratten in view of Bahr, claims 2-7 rejected as unpatentable over Bratten in view of Bahr, taken further in view of Ishigahi, and claims 10 and 11 rejected as unpatentable over Bratten in view of Bahr taken further in view of Lee.

While at the interview conducted in April, the Examiner suggested claiming the particular guiding of the permanent filter belt.

Claim 1 already recites guide means in which the permanent media belt is recirculated from the exit end of the tank, down beneath the bottom of the tank, up the rear wall, and thence back into the tank.

Claim 1 also recites guide means for the chain conveyor to recirculate the same back over the top of the tank, whereby the permanent filter belt and chain conveyor have divergent paths at the exit point and reconverge at the entrance point.

Heretofore tank filters with a chain conveyor and a permanent filter belt frictionally driven thereby guided these belts through the same path rather than a divergent path as claimed in claim 1 in which the chain conveyor returns over the top of the tank and the permanent media belt returns around the bottom of the tank.

The Examiner combines the teachings of Bratten, which has no permanent filter media belt, with Bahr, which is not a tank filter, but rather a device for dewatering sludge.

In Bratten, a disposable filter media is frictionally driven by a chain conveyor, but the disposable media is not recirculated, but merely collected at the exit end for disposal.

Bahr has no tank, and a water saturated sludge is deposited on a first belt 14, and a pair of pressure zones are created by a second belt 15 convergent with the first belt at two different areas. The sludge is further dewatered with the belts, 14, 15 having the sludge sandwiched between them passing through a series of drums and finally between a pair of platen belts 55, 56.

Thus, the belts 14, 15 which have zones of convergency are both filter belts, and neither is a conveyor belt which frictionally drives the other. Since there is no tank, here is no teaching regarding the recirculation path of each belt relative to a tank. The mutual convergency of the filter belts in Bahr is to create zones of pressure acting on the sludge trapped between the belts. The convergency of the open chain conveyor and the permanent filter belt has no such effect.

The teachings of Bahr would not be considered applicable to Bratten since the disclosed device is completely different, and in any event, Bahr does not provide any teaching of the proposed modification of Bratten.

The use of a permanent media belt which is recirculated is admittedly known in the tank filters of Bratten, but applicant disagrees that the structure of claim 1 would be obvious. That is,



recirculation path around the tank bottom of a permanent filter belt combined with an over-the-top of the tank chain conveyor recirculation path is not suggested in the prior art references.

Such over-the-top chain conveyors have usually used disposable media which is not recirculated but merely collected, as in the Bratten patent relied on by the Examiner.

Where a permanent media belt has been used with a chain drive conveyor, both a friction driving chain conveyor and permanent media belt have been circulated through the same path, as in U.S. Patent 4,514,301, referenced in the specification.

No teaching for the specific divergent-convergent recirculation paths for a friction drive chain conveyor and permanent filter belt about a filter tank as recited in claim 1 are found in the references.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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